

# **CALIFORNIA CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION**

**APRIL 18, 2002 COMMISSION MEETING**

**SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA**

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

### **ITEM 1      Call to Order**

- Chairman Rob Reiner called the meeting to order at 9:10a.m.
- The Chairman announced that the review process for proposals submitted in response to Request for Proposals (RFP) CCFC #6866, "Technical Assistance To County Commissions" was still in progress. Therefore, Item #8 on the Commission meeting agenda, "Funding Approval for Technical Assistance Contract" would not be taken up at this meeting.

### **ITEM 2      Roll Call**

- Those in attendance were Commission Chair Rob Reiner, Vice Chair Kimberly Belshé, Commissioners Sandra Gutierrez, Louis Vismara, and Ex-Officio Member Theresa Garcia. Commissioner Karen Hill-Scott and Ex-Officio Member Glen Rosselli arrived later. Commissioner Elizabeth Grossman was absent.

### **ITEM 3      Approval of Minutes-Action**

- The minutes of the February 14-15, 2002 Commission Meeting and Planning Retreat were adopted as drafted.

### **ITEM 4      Chairman's Report-Rob Reiner**

- Chairman Reiner reported on the high level of success achieved by the recent Children and Families Commission's Statewide Conference held in San Diego on March 21-22. He was pleased to report that over 500 attendees representing 56 of 58 counties attended the conference. There were 36 workshops, 25 exhibitors, a pre-conference academy, and keynote speakers of national reputation, including Eunice Kennedy-Shriver, Executive Vice-President of the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation, and Dr. Pedro Noguera, Professor of Communities and Schools, Harvard University Graduate School of Education. Chairman Reiner also highlighted the parent panel that addressed the needs of special needs children. Chairman Reiner thanked the planning committee, county representatives and all who made the Statewide Conference such a success.

- The Chairman announced that California Children and Families Commission ads had recently won awards from the American Association of Political Consultants (the "Pollies"). The English language ads were entered in the state level public affairs categories (as opposed to national or local), and the Spanish and API ads were entered in the Bilingual/Foreign Language categories, which cover national, state, and local campaigns.

- The Children and Families Commission won in the following categories:

State Public Affairs Campaign Special Award:  
First place, CCFC

State Public Affairs Radio Ad:  
First place, CCFC "Smoking"

Bilingual/Foreign Language Public Affairs Radio Ad:  
First place, CCFC "Every" (Korean)

State Public Affairs TV Ad:  
First place, CCFC "Preemie"  
Honorable Mention, CCFC "Laundry"

Bilingual/Foreign Language Public Affairs TV Ad:  
First place, CCFC "Whirlwind" (Spanish)  
Second place, CCFC "Laundry" (Korean)

- The Chairman discussed the announcement by President Bush of the Early Childhood Initiative that will focus attention and funding on the importance of early childhood development with a renewed focus on Head Start programs. Senators Kennedy and Voinovich are also introducing a bill to offer grants to states who want to implement programs similar to Proposition 10.
- Chairman Reiner pointed out a newspaper editorial in the April 8, 2002 edition of the San Jose Mercury News that praised the School Readiness Initiative and the Santa Clara County CFC.
- Chairman Reiner announced that Commissioner Sandra Gutierrez was reappointed to the Commission by the new speaker of the Assembly, Herb Wesson, to another four-year term and the Chairman acknowledged the commitment and dedication Commissioner Guterrez brings to the Children and Families Commission and the benefit she brings to the children of California.

## **ITEM 5      Executive Director's Report-Jane Henderson**

- Dr. Henderson reported on the results of the Commission's planning retreat held in February and discussed in more detail the five Focus Areas/Major Issues identified by the Commissioners at the retreat as being areas that the Commission wants to address. A proposed schedule for future Commission meetings for staff to present discussion and action items was presented to the Commission. Dr. Henderson summarized the focus areas: (1) Informal Caregiver Support, (2) Children of Migrant Farm Worker Families, (3) Oral Health, (4) Children with Disabilities and Other Special Needs, and (5) Mental Health. Work is progressing on all these issues and there is a high level of cooperation and collaboration with our county partners. Requests for "volunteers" from county commissions to assist Commission staff in various focus areas has been generously responded to and meetings with counties are continuing to develop a work process and draft timelines. Dr. Henderson stated that these five issues must be integrated with existing workload, and that some issues may move along faster or slower than others since some may be related to already ongoing initiatives, while others may be starting from scratch. Vice Chair Belshé wanted to be sure that the Master Plan for Education was a part of the thinking in developing these proposals, and Commissioner Vismara wanted to allow for input from the public and parents and allow for flexibility in the timeline due to changing priorities. Dr. Henderson assured the Commission that the entire effort is flexible, and staff does not want to make any unrealistic expectations regarding this effort, and that it was important to obtain comment and input from a wide variety of sources.
- It was announced by Dr. Henderson that SRI, International was awarded the Research and Evaluation contract and that a discussion of Evaluation was to have been a part of this agenda, but was pulled to allow for a fuller discussion with the Commission on evaluation at the next Commission meeting. Representatives from SRI met with the California Children and Families Association (CCAFA) at their monthly meeting on the previous day. The Research and Evaluation contract is currently pending approval at the state Department of General Services.
- An update on the School Readiness (SR) Initiative was provided. Dr. Henderson reported that there were 42 SR Initiative programs in 19 Counties. There is now a revised SR application on the Children and Families Commission website and the next application deadline is May 15, 2002.
- The State Commission has created a School Readiness Partnership unit headed by Roberta Peck and assisted by Carmen Padilla, Mary Anne Riehl-Campos, and Jeremy Holloway.
- The UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families and Communities is in the process of implementing the interim Technical Assistance contract. UCLA staff are preparing deliverables and list serve additions to its website and is beginning to provide some technical assistance services to county commissions.

- The Commission issued a statement to counties regarding the funding for “fixed assets” as part of Proposition 10 funding options. Dr. Henderson summarized the statement by stating that while the State Commission does not have the authority to provide funds for such fixed assets, individual counties **may** have, depending upon their structure and relationship with their particular county.
- Dr. Henderson reported that Governor Davis’ Child Care and Development Restructuring plan will be taken up between the Administration and the Legislature, and there may be some changes made during the May Revision of the state budget.
- Other events:
  - Dr. Henderson attended a Gary Hart Symposium on Pre-School Education and participated in a very stimulating discussion that focused on the importance of pre-school.
  - Commissioner Karen Hill-Scott gave a presentation to the Legislature on March 6 on School Readiness Master Plan recommendations.
  - On March 11 there was a TASC-sponsored “Neurons to Neighborhoods” presentation to the legislature that was very well received.
  - Commission Chair Rob Reiner was recently honored by UC Berkeley as a “Public Health Hero” for his efforts on improving the lives of children and families.
- Dr. Henderson welcomed Jeanne Taylor to the Commission Staff. Ms. Taylor will work on legislative issues for the State Commission.

## **ITEM 6      California Children and Families Association Report**

- Brenda Blasingame, Executive Director of Contra Costa County and Vice-President of the California Children and Families Association presented on behalf of Pat Wheatley, Association President. Ms. Blasingame reported on the Association’s meeting that was conducted the day before. Topics she addressed were:
  - Status of the Ameri-Corps Project that is underway in 15 counties and is a collaborative effort that is focused on School Readiness programs.
  - The State/County Workgroups on the focus areas identified during the State Commissioners retreat, and the collaborative effort to address them. Ms. Blasingame acknowledged the very tight time frame necessary to go from “vision to action”.
  - The discussion with the SRI International staff during the Association meeting and how to address (1) initial steps in the Evaluation process, (2) identification of new and current practices, and (3) how to engage families in the process.

- A statement in support of increased funding proposal that was scheduled to be presented at this meeting for small and rural counties and to thanks the Commission for their efforts in this area.
- Introduction of the new Executive Director of the California Children and Families Association, Sherry Novick, who is in the process of moving over from the offices of Assemblymember Dion Aroner. She will begin her work part-time with the Association in May and will be full-time by September.

## **ITEM 7      Mental Health Policy Panel**

A panel of mental health experts presented to the Commission a summary of research findings and promising strategies in improving mental health outcomes for young children and their families. The presentation also included an update on the Commission-funded California Infant, Preschool and Family Mental Health Initiative. The following is a summary of panelist presentations:

- Stephen Mayberg, Ph.D., Director, Department of Mental Health, provided opening comments that focused on the Departmental of Mental Health and its programs and characterized them as being more of a “safety net” and that he was more interested in a focus on “preventive” services. He appreciated the fact that the Children and Families Commission was willing to explore ways to minimize or prevent the development of mental health disorders and focus on the earliest stages of brain and attachment development, and on looking at broader issues of services delivery rather than individual mental health programs in a silo approach.
- Robert Hendren, D.O., MIND Institute, University of California, Davis, discussed the neuroscience of brain formation and laid the scientific foundation for the discussion. He discussed how his work in autism and other neurodevelopment issues led to his understanding of the importance of early childhood development and that brain development is on a continuum that begins before birth and is always going on and that “we can influence it” for the better.
- Patricia Van Horne, Ph.D. discussed the importance of attachment and bonding. She addressed two major mental health issues: (1) that relationships with a primary caregiver need to be supported, and (2) children live in an environment where they experience violence, and this affects them. She pointed out that one cannot understand a child’s status in isolation, but needs to understand the relationship with the primary caregiver. Policy makers should focus on the importance of supporting the primary caregiver.
- Lynne Huffman, M.D., Stanford University School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics and the Children’s Health Council focused her comments on children being ready for school and what happens when children are **not** ready. Dr. Huffman reported that studies and literature review shows clearly that how successful a child will be in school, and after school, in later adolescent or adult

life can be determined by how prepared they were to enter school, and the strength of bonding with their primary caregiver. Studies of at-risk factors identified a number of precursors to difficulties that are consistent among populations.

- Sherrie Segovia, M.A., Social Services Consultant from the Hope Street Family Center, discussed mental health issues from the perspective of one who provides direct services. As the previous speakers had done, she focused on the importance of supporting the primary caregiver, and in identifying programs that can assist in early intervention. Outlining a “case study” of a typical Hope Street Service Center family, she cited the importance of non-traditional approaches such as home visitations where families can gain broader access to services as a unit rather than by qualifying silo structured programs that pigeon holes clients, families, and children.
- Gil Chavez, M.D., State Maternal and Child Health Director, outlined the Maternal and Child Health programs. Citing that mental health is fundamental to health, Dr. Chavez focused on the impact of mental health disorders on the family, and on society. He noted that 1 in 5 children have some sort of mental health issue to deal with, and that the most important mental health issues facing this population are maternal depression, and lack of services. Maternal depression has a profound effect on school readiness as mothers are unable to assist their children at the critical earliest stages of emotional/social development, and without early assistance and support, identification and correction of issues at these early times is difficult if not impossible.
- Penny Knapp, M.D., Project Coordinator, Infant, Preschool and Family Mental Health Initiative, reported on the initiative that was funded by the California Children and Families Commission. The project funding was for \$3.6 Million dollars to increase mental health services to children 0-5 in the context of their families, and to increase the capacity to deliver those services, in concert with other agencies and programs that work with young children. Dr. Knapp reported that the program had expanded and piloted the delivery of integrated services to the 0-5 populations in 8 counties. The program had identified effective methods and measures for screening, assessment, service coordination and delivery, including funding resources and billing mechanisms. It has developed community education, technical assistance and consultation services for participating counties. It trained new infant, family and early mental health specialists in the participating counties, and provided interagency and interdisciplinary collaboration. Evaluation is currently underway, but this program will contribute to school readiness of children by strengthening the emotional resilience and stability of at-risk pre-school children

Discussion followed the Panel presentations and focused on the clear importance of bonding with a primary care giver. Chairman Reiner spoke of the importance this bonding has to the establishment of healthy relationships throughout life. Vice Chair Belshé and others asked the question, given all these issues and their significance, what can the Commission do with its limited funds and resources to affect change? Director Mayberg cited the importance of the Commission's visibility and in being a catalyst for change in informing the public, our lawmakers, and policy leaders regarding the importance of these issues. Lynne Huffman echoed this point by identifying the area of curriculum development in programs that address mental health, early childhood development, and maternal/child bonding.

The discussion also focused on how to address such deeply personal or emotional issues at the "micro" or family level to silo service delivery rather than services provided comprehensively, and the underutilization of the federally funded Early and Periodic, Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) program.

Dr. Henderson summarized the discussion by pointing out three focus areas that came from the presentations and follow-up discussion:

- Improve services and linkages between systems (and less "silo" programs)
- Improve provider education
- Support systems that look at early identification of mental health issues
- Focus on School Readiness in whatever we do to affect mental health

At the conclusion of the formal presentation and discussion, Shannon Whaley, Ph.D., a child development specialist, presented comments regarding the Mental Health needs of families served by the WIC (Women, Infants and Children) program. WIC is a supplemental nutrition program for women, infants and children that serve over 1.2 million low-income women and young children every month with nutritional education and food vouchers. Dr. Whaley outlined a proposal being submitted to the Los Angeles County Children and Families Commission to address the mental health needs of low-income women and children to build closer systems of services delivery within communities.

#### **ITEM 8      Funding Approval for Technical Assistance Contract**

- This agenda item was taken off the agenda.

#### **ITEM 9      Legislative Items**

- Utilizing existing legislative review criteria, the Commission was asked to consider and/or adopt positions on the following bills:
  - Commission-sponsored bill:  
AB 2800 (Chan) – Amendments to statute relating to State Commission to make explicit the authority of the Commission to carry out its goal to "ensure that children are ready to enter school."  
**Action:** Support AB 2800

- The Commission voted to support the following bills:
  - AB 2811 (Migden) – Financial Grants for Child Development Teaching Students  
**Action:** Support AB 2811
  - AB 2857 (Chan) – Healthy Start Support Services Planning Grants  
**Action:** Support AB 2857
  - SB 1661 (Kuehl) – Paid Family Medical Leave for New Parents  
**Action:** Support SB 1661
- The Commission also voted to support the following tobacco tax bills:
  - AB 1768 (Wayne) – Cigarette Stamps and Meter Machines
  - SB 1701 (Peace) – Tobacco Tax Stamps
  - SB 1890 (Ortiz) – Tobacco Tax Use Reduction & Compensation Act of 2002 (Tax Increase). The approved position for SB 1890 was to support with amendments to include a “hold harmless” provision in the bill so that Prop 10 will not be expected to back-fill Prop 99 programs.
- The Commission discussed the impact of supporting bills for continued funding of programs altered or reduced due to difficult budget decisions made during the current economic situation, and of the impact of additional tobacco tax legislation designed to reduce tobacco usage upon county programs funded by Proposition 10. These issues will be discussed in more detail at later Commission meetings

**ITEM 10      Funding Approval for Continuation of the Child Care Health Linkages Project**

- The Commission was presented with a request to consider approving a funding proposal to continue the Child Care Health Linkages Project. This was a project originally funded by the Commission, but for a number of reasons related to the original contract implementation, it got off to a slow start. A new contractor, San Francisco State School of Nursing, was selected and the linkages project is now underway and meeting expectations with 21 linkages contracts in place and a training curriculum has been developed. The Commission approved a 24 month project extension.  
**Action:** Approved

**ITEM 11      Funding Approvals for the Continuation of the Childhood Asthma Initiative:**

- The Commission was presented with a request to consider approving a funding proposal to continue the Childhood Asthma Initiative. The request was for \$6.4 million to contract with the California Department of Health Services to continue the initiative for an additional two years. The funds would continue to enhance community asthma partnerships; asthma management services to children ages' birth to 5 years, health care provider education, clinical quality improvement community and statewide evaluations and other elements. The project is related to School Readiness and enhancing development by reducing the health impact of asthma in children 0-5 and doing so in a focused and comprehensive manner.  
**Action:** Approved

**ITEM 12      School Readiness Component of the Legislature's Master Plan for Education**

- The Commission was presented a brief overview of the final report of the School Readiness Working Group by Commissioner Karen Hill-Scott. Commissioner Hill-Scott outlined what could be a 20-year process. She cited data that by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, children are "sorted" and their success in school can be predicted by that time. This is why the first five years of life are so critically important and cannot be ignored. The focus of the School Readiness Working Group is to come from the perspective of the family and that there are no real systems in place to support the family. School Readiness Centers that provide flexible services that are family-supportive will meet this need. The Working Group provided 14 recommendations to meet the objective of creating a School Readiness system capable of helping kids become ready for school. Following the presentation, the Commission discussed the recommendations in the context of Commission policies and programs and where the Commission can have some impact in advancing the Working Group recommendations.

**ITEM 13      Small County Funding Allocation**

- The Commission discussed and reviewed options for continuing and expanding the State Commission supplemental funding to rural and small population counties. The request was for a funding augmentation for these counties to ensure there is sufficient capacity and infrastructure in rural and small population areas to achieve the goals of Proposition 10 and the implementation of School Readiness statewide. The request to be presented at the May Commission meeting will likely be to (1) continue the administrative and travel augmentations, (2) increase the minimum allocation of the 13 smallest population counties, and (3) expand school readiness statewide to all counties.

**ITEM 14      Media Campaign Development**

- The Commission was provided with a brief update for discussion on the CCFC media campaign, including future activities and development of new advertising to promote the availability of the Kit for New Parents. Promotion of the Kit for Parents campaign could include a change to the end of the currently approved ads to specifically encourages parents and caregivers to call for a free Kit. A second option would be to develop and produce new ads that feature and promote the Kit. In these ads, parents could tell real stories about the positive impact the Kit has made in raising their children.

**ITEM 15      Adjournment at 4:00p.m.**